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Meeting: Recreation, Amenities & Environment Committee, Item RAE3.8

Date: 10th August 2021

Author: Assistant Town Clerk (Planning & Amenities)

Subject: Allotments Officer Report

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update councillors on activity related to allotments that has occurred since the Place-making and Protection Committee meeting on 23/02/2021.
- 1.2 To consider and agree on a recommendation from officers that there should be no increase in allotment fees for the year 01/10/2022-30/09/2023.
- 1.3 For two councillors to be nominated to judge the allotment awards.

2.0 Waiting List/Inspection

- 2.1 Some plots have become vacant and the office is working through the waiting list to allocate them in order of application.
- 2.2 Inspections are being carried out regularly and allotment holders notified if there are any issues with their plots.

3.0 S106 Application (S106 application number - 2012/0842 - £30,916.77)

- 3.1 The Town Council has now received notification from Mendip District Council that It has been successful in the application for the funding for the improvements to the allotments (£19,450.37). The major works are likely to be undertaken during the autumn and we are liaising with the allotment holders who will be directly affected by any works. Some of the initial aspirations of the allotment holders have had to be modified due to proposed ground works and the delay has been caused by a number of Issues: Pandemic, lack of staff to move the project forward and a delay In the decision for the awarding of S106 funds.
- 3.2 A funding agreement between SMTC and MDC has been signed. The monies have been received and put into an EMF and any monies not spent will be returned to MDC.

3.3 A newsletter is being sent to all allotment holders to update them on the outcome of the application.

4.0 Allotment Fees

4.1 The invoicing of all allotment plots will take place during August/September. As it is necessary to give one year's notice to allotment holders for any increase in fees, a decision needs to be taken as to whether an increase is viable.

The annual income from the allotments for 2021/2022 will be £3250.

The costs for all allotment sites for 2020/21 was £3114.03.

Plot Size	Agreed Rent 2019/2020	Agreed Rent 2020/2021	Agreed Rent 2021/2022	Suggested Rent 2022/2023
Small	£15.00	£16.50	£26.00	£26.00
Medium	£21.00	£23.00	£39.00	£39.00
Large	£35.00	£38.50	£52.00	£52.00

4.2 As there has been a significant increase over the last three years and the fact that allotment holders might have been affected by the effects of the pandemic, it is suggested that rents are not increased for the year 2022/2023 and is reviewed by committee during 2022.

5.0 Annual Allotment Awards

5.1 The allotments are inspected, usually mid to late August each year, by councillors to give awards for the best kept plots, with runners-up, highly commended and best newcomer at each site. A criterion exists and councillors are asked to use their judgement to make the awards. The awards are usually given at a council meeting in the autumn. Allotment holders are being consulted, via a newsletter, as to whether they wish that a separate awards night to be arranged, which would be used to showcase, in photography, the best of the allotments.

6.0 Town Plan Reference

6.1

Allotments	Continue to maintain and promote the allotment sites to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to grow their own
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7.0 Recommendations

For councillors to note the report and to:

7.1 Agree that there should be no increase in allotment fees for the year 01/10/2022-30/09/2023.

7.2 Nominate two councillors to judge the annual allotment awards.